



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS  
OFFICE OF CAMPAIGN & POLITICAL FINANCE

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MARY F. MCTIGUE  
DIRECTOR

December 7, 1989  
AO-89-27

Daniel B. Winslow  
Suite 2800  
100 Summer Street  
Boston, MA 02110

Dear Mr. Winslow:

This letter is in response to your request for an advisory opinion.

You have stated that you have organized a group of individuals, including legislators from the Massachusetts Senate and House of Representatives and leaders of the Republican Party. This organization has tentatively been named the "Republican Redistricting Task Force" (the "Task Force"). The Task Force will finance activities related solely to the state and congressional redistricting process in Massachusetts. The resources of the Task Force will be used to pay for computer services, including computer time and personnel; to gather demographic data on Massachusetts congressional and legislative districts; and on any court costs incurred in legal challenges to congressional and state legislative redistricting plans. No resources of the Task Force will be expended for the purpose of nomination or election of a specific candidate or candidates, or for the purpose of opposing or promoting a charter change, referendum question, constitutional amendment or other questions submitted to the voters.

You have made a number of inquiries, for which we will attempt to provide answers as follows:

1. Whether the Task Force will be required to register with the office as a political committee and file a report of its activities?

Section 1 of M.G.L. c.55 defines a political committee as "any committee, association, organization or other group of persons, including a national, regional, state, county or municipal committee, which receives contributions or makes expenditures for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of a candidate, or candidates . . . or for the purpose of opposing or promoting a charter change, referendum question, constitutional amendment or other question submitted to the voters."

It is the opinion of this office that the Task Force, in

financing activities related solely to the state and congressional redistricting process in Massachusetts, will not be receiving contributions or making expenditures for the purpose of influencing the nomination or election of a candidate, or candidates, or for the purpose of opposing or promoting a charter change, referendum question, constitutional amendment or other question submitted to the voters. The Task Force will therefore not be functioning as a political committee, and thus not be required to file a report of its activities with the office.

2. Whether contributors to the Task Force will be subject to the contribution limitations and reporting requirements of M.G.L. c.55?

Because the Task Force will not be operating as a political committee, it is the opinion of this office that contributors will not be subject, with the exception of corporate contributions described below, to the contribution limitations and reporting requirements of M.G.L. c.55.

3. Whether the Task Force may accept corporate contributions to finance its activities?

Section 8 of M.G.L. c.55 prohibits business corporations from directly or indirectly giving, paying, expending or contributing, or promising to give, pay, expend or contribute any money or other valuable thing for the purpose of aiding or promoting or antagonizing the interests of any political party.

Because of the sponsorship of Republican legislators and leaders for the Task Force, it is the opinion of this office that corporate contributions to the Task Force would be prohibited by section 8 of M.G.L. c.55 as contributions aiding or promoting or antagonizing the interests of the Republican Party.

This opinion has been rendered solely on the basis of the representations made in your letter and solely in the context of M.G.L. c.55.

Please do not hesitate to contact this office should you have additional questions.

Very truly yours,



Mary F. McTigue  
Director